

VZCZCXRO7162
PP RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHDIR RUEHKUK RUEHLH RUEHPW RUEHROV
DE RUEHJI #0506/01 3430851
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 090851Z DEC 07
FM AMCONSUL JEDDAH
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0420
INFO RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNISL/ISLAMIC COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 1678
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 1754
RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH PRIORITY 7651
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JEDDAH 000506

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

RIYADH, PLEASE PASS TO DHAHRAN; DEPT PASS TO NEA/ARP FOR
RJACHIM/SRAMESH

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/09/2017

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [SOCI](#) [KISL](#) [SA](#)

SUBJECT: MOSQUE SERMONS FOR SAUDI ARABIA NOVEMBER 16, 23,
30: GRAND MUFTI, EASTERN PROVINCE, MECCA, AND MEDINA

Classified By: Consul General Tatiana Gfoeller for Reasons 1.4 (b) and
(d).

¶1. (C) BEGIN SUMMARY: The Grand Mufti recommended on
November 30 that terrorists be sentenced to "Had al-Haraba,"
a Quranic punishment that can include execution followed by
displaying the body in crucified pose. Sermons in the
Eastern Province's al-Khobar al-Rawdha Grand Mosque on
November 16 and November 23 focused on respect for the law,
particularly concerning loans and inheritance. In Mecca's
al-Haram Mosque, a November 16 sermon discussed equality and
asked God to give victory to those who perform jihad
"everywhere and in Palestine," and sermons on November 23 and
November 30 addressed the upcoming pilgrimage season. In
Medina's al-Nabawi Mosque, sermons during this period
emphasized the importance of worship. END SUMMARY.

GRAND MUFTI

SENTENCE TERRORISTS TO "HAD AL-HARABA"

¶2. (U) The Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia, Sheikh Abdul Aziz
bin Abdullah al Sheikh, recommended in his November 30 sermon
that terrorists be sentenced to "Had al-Haraba," a Quranic
punishment designated for robbery and crimes against society.
The sentencing can consist of exile, amputation, or
execution followed by the public display of the body in
crucified pose. (NOTE: This sermon was given two days after
the SAG announced the arrest of over 200 suspected terrorists
in six cells. END NOTE.)

EASTERN PROVINCE

RESPECT FOR THE LAW

¶3. (C) In the Eastern Province's al-Khobar al-Rawdha Grand
Mosque on November 16, the khatib (mosque official who
delivers the sermon) spoke on respect for the law,
criticizing what he described as a growing tendency for
people to find ways to avoid paying bills and loans. He said
cases of loan defaults were flooding the Saudi justice system
beyond capacity. (COMMENT: The LES who attended this sermon
interpreted it as indirect criticism of the SAG's poor record
of prosecuting white-collar crimes. END COMMENT.)

¶4. (C) On November 23, the same khatib discussed wills and the importance of dividing estates in strict accordance with Shari'ah law. He also condemned the sin of denying orphans their rightful inheritance. He then said that meeting one's obligations should be the objective of every Muslim.

MECCA

EQUALITY, UNITY, JIHAD

¶5. (U) In Mecca's al-Haram Mosque on November 16, Sheikh Dr. Abd-al-Rahman al-Sudays stated that Islam prohibits "calling each other by offensive nicknames" and "taking pride in descent and kinship." He said that all people are equal and that they are rewarded by God according to their piety. He concluded by asking God to "grant victory to our brothers who perform jihad in your cause everywhere and in Palestine against the occupier and aggressor Zionists." He also prayed for God to "help our brothers in Iraq" and to unite them.

THE GREATEST SEASON

¶6. (U) In the al-Haram Mosque on November 23, Sheikh Salih al-Talib discussed this year's pilgrimage, calling it Mecca's "greatest season." He referred to pilgrims as "the delegation of God" and urged worshippers to treat them well. He then praised the SAG's services to "the two holy mosques" (al-Haram in Mecca and al-Nabawi in Medina) and to pilgrims.

¶7. (U) On November 30, Sheikh Sa'ud al-Shuraym gave a sermon

JEDDAH 00000506 002 OF 002

at the al-Haram Mosque describing pilgrimage as a focal point for altruism and brotherhood. He also discussed Islamic jurisprudence with respect to pilgrimage.

MEDINA

THE IMPORTANCE OF WORSHIP

¶8. (U) At Medina's Nabawi Mosque on November 16, Sheikh Ali Bin-Abd-al-Rahman al-Hudhayfi said that there can be no success in this life or the next except by worshipping God. On November 23, Sheikh Husayn al-Shaykh stated that what makes a Muslim happy is "to devote his entire worship to God." On November 30, Sheikh Abd-al-Muhsin al-Qasim discussed the reward for those who worship God as "the only and the one."
GFOELLER